

V

BOOK REVIEWS

CONTRACEPTION: ITS THEORY, HISTORY AND PRACTICE. By Marie Carmichael Stopes, D.Sc. London, etc. Third Edition. Pp. 487. London: Pitman, 1931. Price 15s.

IN this book Dr. Marie Stopes gives details of many methods of contraception applicable to particular types of women—nulliparous, multiparous, and those with prolapse or other abnormalities, requiring special appliances or drugs. The whole range of contraceptive technique is gone over: caps of various types are described in detail, and all chemical pessaries in ordinary use in England are described and their value or lack of good properties considered. The much discussed "Gold spring" pessary is described and recommended by the author, with reservations as to supervision of patient by the surgeon twice or thrice yearly.

Such expensive expedients are not the only devices described, as Dr. Stopes recommends as a simple and adequate contraceptive in many cases, a large tampon soaked in olive oil.

The rest of the book is taken up with the historical aspect of contraception from very early days till the present time, and the legal position of contraception in Britain, Ireland, France and America is stated.

No matter what the personal opinion of any practitioner may be with regard to contraception, our profession owes a debt of gratitude to Dr. Stopes for her scientific attitude towards a subject which was till recently relegated to the category of subjects in doubtful taste, and in consequence was dealt with by unqualified and inexperienced people. All doctors dealing with women patients should know at least the elements of this important subject.

M. R.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF VENEREAL DISEASES. By David Lees, F.R.C.S., M.R.C.P. Ed., Surgeon in Charge of Venereal Diseases, Edinburgh Royal Infirmary. Second Edition. Pp. 634. E. and S. Livingstone, 1931. Price 15s.

THE demand for a new edition of a text-book may be due to its established popularity or to the necessity for the introduction of recent advances in knowledge. Although there can be no doubt that the former reason is the greater factor in the production of the second edition of this work, the inclusion of new material is also a feature.

The general arrangement and character of this book have remained unaltered and the addition of eight coloured plates considerably enhances its value as a practical guide to students and practitioners.

The section on syphilis of the nervous system has been augmented. The author has found tryparsamide to be the most effective remedy in the treatment of early neuro-syphilis and gives full details of his scheme of treatment with this preparation. Pyrogenic methods of treatment

BRITISH JOURNAL OF VENEREAL DISEASES

for later cases by sulfosin, T.A.B. vaccine and malarial inoculation also receive due attention: the value of the latter method is fully discussed. The technique of cisternal puncture is described in detail.

One of the most important additions is an excellent chapter on cardio-vascular syphilis. The author emphasises the widespread affection of the arteries in the early stage of syphilis and that the disease is primarily one of the blood vessels. The difficulties associated with an early diagnosis are discussed; electrocardiographic investigations were found to provide little help.

Both arsenobenzol derivatives and bismuth preparations are advocated following preliminary treatment with potassium iodide. In the opinion of the author arsenobenzol compounds should be given intramuscularly beginning with small doses.

In general the section on the treatment of gonorrhoea and its complications constitute an admirable exposition of practical methods. Instructions on the technique of irrigation, which are so frequently inadequate in current text-books, are most clear and full. The author's counsel on the vexed question of if, and when urethro-vesical irrigations should be instituted is particularly sound.

Dr. Lees describes the method of treatment by vasostomy and considers this procedure more applicable to chronic infections than to cases in which the infection is recent or limited. His experience of diathermy is that while it has proved a useful method of relief for acute gonococcal joints it is not a means of cure. The results of treatment with mercurochrome in the author's hands have not confirmed the results published in the country of its origin.

We would like to see more stress laid on the importance of ano-rectal infection in infants with gonococcal vulvo-vaginitis; also the inclusion of appropriate treatment.

The practical details in the chapter on the treatment of congenital syphilis are not up to the high standard of the remainder of the volume.

In general this book fulfils its aim most admirably in expounding sound principles and practical methods of diagnosis and treatment of venereal diseases.

V. L.